

## ***Guidelines for the Implementation of K-12 Modern and Classical Languages A Component of the Comprehensive Education Plan***

### **Purpose:**

Maine statute ([Title 20-A MRSA, Chapter 222: Standards and Assessment of Student Performance](#)) specifies that each school system shall address in its Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) by the end of the 2002-2003 school year how it will implement Modern and Classical Languages for all students, including interim targets for partial implementation. Title 20-A further specifies that each school system shall implement the Modern and Classical Languages standards of the [Learning Results](#) by the end of the 2006-2007 school year [delayed at least one additional year due to the proposed funding formula], contingent upon funding based on Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.

The purpose of the Modern and Classical Languages Implementation Plan is to ensure that all students enrolled in Maine schools in grades K-12 have the opportunity to achieve the content standards in Modern and Classical Languages. The plan is to be:

- aligned with the system of Maine's *Learning Results*
- focused on the learning of all students
- oriented to continuous improvement

### **Rationale:**

In addition to the legislated requirements for Modern and Classical Languages, research on second language acquisition provides an impressive rationale for implementing a K-12 language program within a school district. (See bibliography at end of document.)

As with any subject area, the more years a child devotes to learning a language, the more competent s/he will become (Met, 1991). Young children possess unique language learning abilities and are better second language learners when they begin their study prior to the onset of adolescence (Nash, 1997; Dumas, 1999). Additionally, students exposed early to other languages perform better in their native language and have a higher level of success in other subject areas (Robinson, 1998).

Children who have studied another language in a sequential, well-articulated program, which begins in elementary school and continues through middle and high school,

- are significantly better at tasks requiring divergent thinking, problem solving, and figural creativity (Landry, 1974);
- score higher on standardized tests in language arts, reading, and math than students not enrolled in foreign language programs (Rafferty, 1986; Garfinkel and Tabor, 1991);
- score higher on the SAT and ACT than students not enrolled in foreign language programs (Cooper, 1987; Olsen and Brown, 1989);
- have the ability to excel in the pronunciation of a foreign language (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982);

- show greater cognitive development in higher order thinking skills (Foster and Reeves, 1989);
- are more open to cultural diversity (Carpenter and Torney, 1974; Hancock and Lipton et al., 1976); and
- have an improved self-concept and sense of achievement (Masciantonio, 1977).

### **Plan development and certification**

School districts in Maine are at varying stages of progress in the implementation of K-12 Modern and Classical Languages programs. The manner in which a program of Modern and Classical Languages is implemented within a school district is a local decision, with each unit determining the format of its individual plan. The recommendations and considerations included in these Guidelines are offered as a resource to all school districts, regardless of the stage of implementation.

Maine [Chapter 127: Instructional Program, Assessment and Diploma Requirements](#) specifies the following timeline for implementing Modern and Classical Languages. Those dates preceded by an asterisk (\*) will be delayed at least one additional year due to the proposed funding formula of Essential Programs and Services:

**2002-2003:** Each school district shall address in its Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) a plan for the implementation of student learning in the content area of Modern and Classical Languages by the end of the 2006-2007 school year, contingent upon funding of Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent. Each superintendent will certify to the Commissioner that this plan is included in the district's CEP.

**Fall 2003:** Students in grade 6, who will graduate 2010, will be required to meet the standards of the Modern and Classical Languages *Learning Results*, contingent upon funding of Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.

**2003-04:** Review Cycle for the System of Learning Results begins. Each year one content area from each of the following categories will be reviewed:

- A. English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies; and
- B. Career Preparation, **Modern and Classical Languages**, Health and Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts.

#### **\*2006-2007**

- **September 2006:** The local curriculum (Pre-K-12) shall include Modern and Classical Languages for all students, contingent upon funding of Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.
- **2006-2007 school year:** Each school district shall implement the Modern and Classical Languages standards of the *Learning Results*, contingent upon funding based on Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.

The Superintendent shall certify to the Commissioner that the local assessment system meets the assessment system standards established in Chapter 127 for Modern and Classical Languages, contingent upon funding based on Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.

The Local Assessment System shall provide school results (grade spans PK-2 and 3-4) and student results (grade spans 5-8 and 9-12) for Modern and Classical Languages, contingent upon funding based on Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.

**2009-2010:** Achievement of the content standards in Modern and Classical Languages is a diploma requirement for all students, contingent upon funding of Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent.

N.B. The phrase “contingent upon funding of Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent” means that these regulations will go into effect if money is appropriated by the Maine State Legislature according to a funding formula entitled “Essential Programs and Services” or an alternative but equivalent funding model, which defines the fiscal resources necessary to implement Maine’s *Learning Results* in all eight content areas.

### **Establish a team**

Effective implementation of Modern and Classical Languages will require the consideration of the needs and perspectives of a wide range of interested parties. A diverse and representative team of key players in grades K-12 could include:

- Business stakeholders
- Curriculum coordinators
- Elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers of modern and classical languages
- Elementary school classroom teachers
- Middle and high school teachers in content areas other than modern and classical languages
- Parents and other community members
- School administrators
- Students

### **Examine the current status of K-12 activities within the district regarding Maine’s Learning Results for Modern and Classical Languages**

Conduct a needs assessment to determine the current status of Modern and Classical Languages programs across the district and to identify the projected needs in terms of human and materials resources (e.g., staff, curriculum, instructional materials, instructional space, technology).

As part of this process, a district identifies at each grade span the Modern and Classical Languages Content Standards and Performance Indicators that currently are being taught and assessed (and how) in each grade level and/or specific course. Depending on the size of the district, this analysis may include multiple teachers at one or more grade spans.

### **Examine “best practices”**

Various models, programs and curricula for Modern and Classical Languages have been developed nationally and statewide. The planning team should carefully review and examine these programs and materials, which can be located through state departments of education, national, regional and state language organizations, and local school districts with exemplary programs.

### **Set goals for full implementation in K-12**

Through goal setting, it will be important to recognize and address the requirements and associated timelines for a sequential, articulated application of the Modern and Classical Languages standards for all students in grades K-12. Local decisions about which language(s) to include may be dependent upon various factors, e.g., the size and/or location of the school district, the existing language program within the district, funding options, teacher availability. The plan should describe the district’s vision for full implementation.

### **Develop interim targets for partial implementation K-12**

Depending on the size and number of schools within a particular district, a timeline for full implementation of Modern and Classical Languages may take a number of years to accomplish. Additionally, the first class of students required to meet the Modern and Classical Languages standards as part of its high school diploma requirements will graduate in 2011, i.e. students entering grade 5 in the fall 2003 (a delay of at least one year from the original legislated date, based on the proposed funding formula of Essential Programs and Services). Planning backwards from 2011, interim target dates and program descriptions for partial implementation at various grade levels and/or schools within a district recognize this reality and will allow for incremental progress and adjustment to the plan as it develops.

### **Plan for professional development**

School district decisions and budgets will dictate the professional development opportunities afforded to teachers and administrators within a district. In order for full implementation to occur, identify prospective plans for training opportunities and other professional development activities necessary for the establishment, maintenance, improvement or expansion of Modern and Classical Languages (contingent upon funding). Examples might include reading, research, conference attendance, school site visits, language immersion experiences. Include this information in the implementation plan.

### **Curriculum Development K-12**

Curriculum development for Modern and Classical Languages in grades K-12, based on Maine *Learning Results* (contingent upon funding), will be necessary to implement the requirements of the law.

Each school district should review, revise and develop curriculum and associated instructional activities aligned with Maine’s *Learning Results* within each grade span in order to form a

sequential, well-articulated program in Modern and Classical Languages. The curriculum will constitute a large part of the effort to implement Modern and Classical Languages and should be addressed in the district's implementation plan. As school districts review, revise and develop curriculum materials for Modern and Classical Languages, they should refer to [\*Guidelines for The Curriculum Development and Review Plan, A Component of the Comprehensive Education Plan\*](#) (Maine Department of Education, May 1, 2003) and the school district's individual plan for curriculum development/review of all content areas. Additionally, the plan for curriculum development in Modern and Classical Languages should be closely connected to both instruction and assessment of this content area within the district.

### **Local Assessment Development**

Based on the [\*LAS Guide: Principles and Criteria for the Adoption of Local Assessment System\*](#) (Maine Department of Education, June 2003), each school district may develop, pilot and implement assessments to measure achievement of Modern and Classical Languages at three grade spans (PK-4\*, 5-8, secondary). It is anticipated that districts will also have the opportunity to use model assessments, based on the Maine [\*LAD \(Local Assessment Development\)\*](#) framework, which may be developed and piloted under the leadership of the Maine Department of Education.

Additional assessments in Modern and Classical Languages will be developed during an Assessment Development Institute (summer 2004), contingent upon funding of Essential Programs and Services or its equivalent, for use in a school district's local assessment system.

Each district's implementation plan should include a plan for the development of local assessments in Modern and Classical Languages.

\*The PK-2 and 3-4 grade spans are combined in the *LAS Guide: Principles and Criteria for the Adoption of Local Assessment Systems*.

### **Determine methods of documentation**

Each school district must make decisions as to how individual student achievement of the Modern and Classical Languages standards within each grade span will be documented consistent with Local Assessment System requirements and protocols used in other content areas.

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